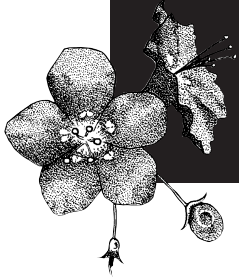


National Park Service

Santa Monica Mountains

National Recreation Area



# CIRCLE X RANCH

Illustrator: Christina Wioch



*Tucked in the canyons above Malibu and nestled below majestic Boney Mountain, you will find Circle X Ranch. This former Boy Scout camp offers many opportunities for exploration and adventure. Journey to Sandstone Peak, the highest point in the Santa Monica Mountains, and see several of the Channel Islands on a clear day. Enjoy a visit to the Grotto or a creekside picnic. Reserve the Group Camp and listen to coyote songs at night.*

Travel one of the many trails that wind through this rare coastal Mediterranean ecosystem. The plants you see here, such as coastal sage scrub and mixed chaparral, are adapted to hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters. Keep an eye out for red shank chaparral, a tree-like shrub with reddish-brown shredded bark, clusters of thread-like leaves, and small bunches of white flowers in July and August.

From the dry, rocky slopes near Sandstone Peak to the lush fern-studded Grotto, Circle X Ranch provides a wide variety of recreational possibilities. Linger here for a while, and experience the ambiance of this secluded mountain retreat.

## Facilities

### Group Campground

Campground is accessible by vehicle.

**Reservations required:** 805-370-2300 x1702.

Limit of 75 persons.

**Fee:** \$2/person per night (Golden Age and Golden Access passport discounts do not apply).

**Facilities:** Picnic tables, vault toilets, drinking water and fire grates. (Charcoal fires are permitted in fire grates or personal barbecue grills. Gas stoves are permitted. Wood or compressed log fires are prohibited due to fire hazards.)

**Check out time:** Must vacate site by noon or pay for another day of camping.

**Maximum stay:** 14 consecutive days and no more than 30 days per calendar year.

**Quiet hours:** 10pm to 6am

Backcountry camping is not available at this time. Call **805-370-2301** for current status.

### Happy Hollow Picnic Area

This backcountry picnic area has no restroom, trash, or water facilities. Please pack out what you pack in.

### Ranch House

This facility includes a meeting room for 75 people, a kitchen, restrooms (with showers), a fireplace and lounge area. No overnight accommodations. Available through reservation/ special use permit. Call **805-370-1854**.



National Park Service  
Santa Monica Mountains  
National Recreation Area  
401 West Hillcrest Drive  
Thousand Oaks CA 91360

Visitor Center 805-370-2301

In emergency: dial 911 or  
Angeles Dispatch 626-447-8993

## Information & Safety

**Be prepared:** take water, food, flashlights and first-aid supplies when hiking, biking, or horseback riding.

**Camping** is restricted to the Group Campground only. Permits are required.

**Water** from streams is not safe to drink due to possible contamination or the presence of the giardia protozoan.

**Dogs** must be on leash at all times and are allowed only on trails, access roads and in the campground. Dogs are not allowed on state park trails.

**Natural and historic features** are protected by law and may not be collected. Watch for and avoid rattlesnakes and poison oak.

**Fire** is a constant danger. Open fires are prohibited. Charcoal and gas stoves are allowed in the Group Campground only. Smoking is not permitted while traveling on trails.

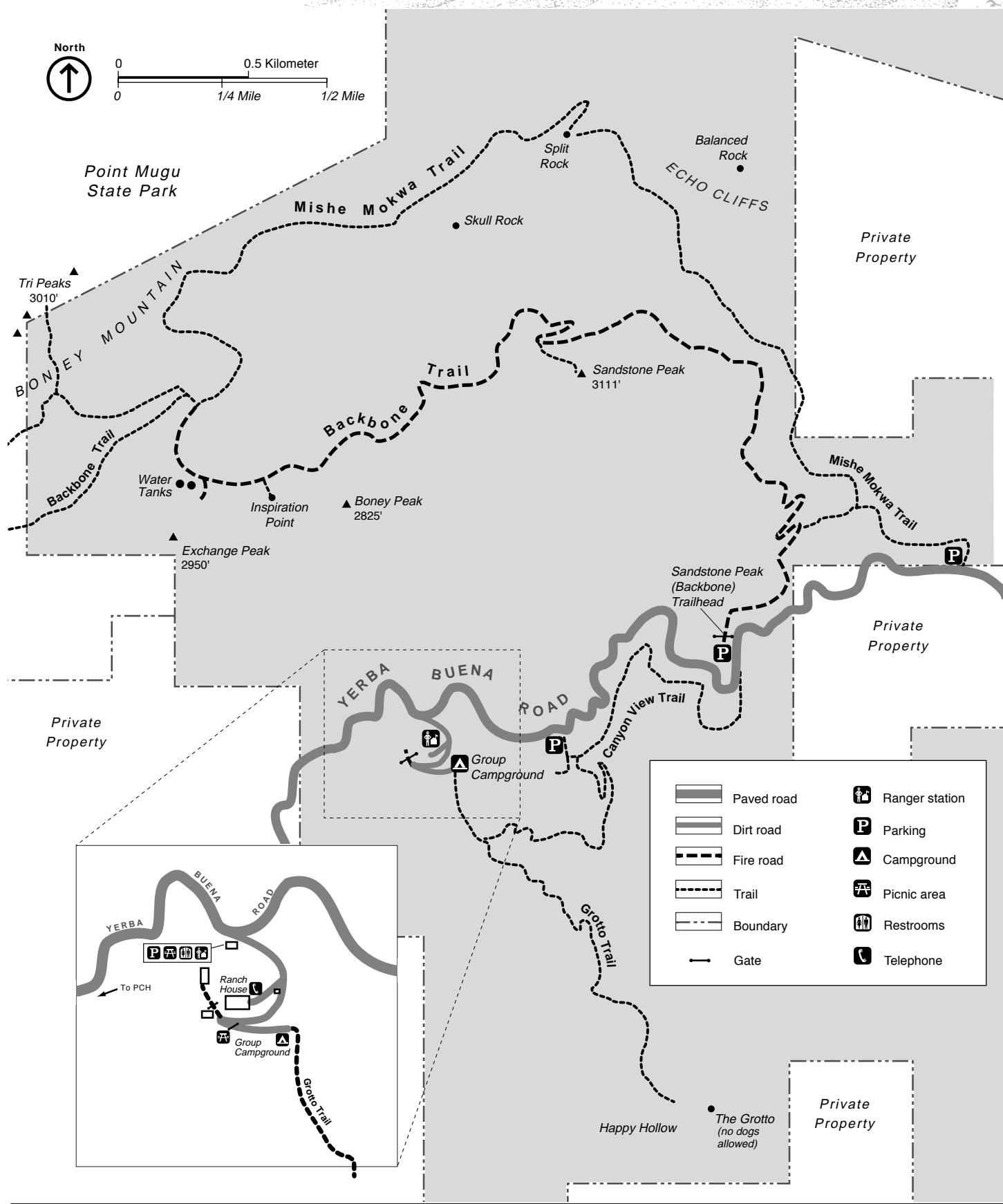
**Bicyclists** must ride courteously and yield to hikers and horseback riders. Bicyclists and horseback riders are allowed on designated trails only.

**Hikers** must yield to horseback riders.

**Firearms** are not allowed in National Park Service areas.

**Trail closures** may be in effect during and following significant rainfall to protect park resources. Trails will be re-opened when dry enough to sustain public use.

# CIRCLE X RANCH



## Trails

**Mishe Mokwa Trail to Sandstone Peak** 6 miles round trip, strenuous—Begin at the Sandstone Peak Trailhead and take the Mishe Mokwa Trail to Split Rock. Continue along the fire road and travel along the ridge on the Backbone Trail to Sandstone Peak. Return to trailhead via the Backbone Trail. Bicyclists and horseback riders are allowed on the Backbone Trail only.

**Canyon View Trail** 1.9 miles, easy to moderate; no bikes— This trail can be accessed from three points: the Group Campground via the Grotto Trail, the trailhead 0.3 mile east of the Ranger Station on Yerba Buena Road, or the Sandstone Peak Trailhead. Enjoy views in every direction.

**Mishe Mokwa Trail to Split Rock** 3.5 miles round trip, moderate; hiking only—This trail begins 1/3 mile up the Backbone Trail from the Sandstone Peak Trailhead. Traversing the riparian, coastal sage scrub and chaparral ecosystems, the trail offers wonderful views of Carlisle Canyon and Balanced Rock. The oak grove at Split Rock provides a shaded picnic spot.

**Backbone Trail to Sandstone Peak** 3 miles round trip, strenuous—Starting at the Sandstone Peak Trailhead at an elevation of 2,050 feet, this trail provides views of the Conejo and San Fernando valleys, as well as the Pacific Coast. *Note: The Backbone Trail continues west to Sycamore Canyon and other trails in Point Mugu State Park. Obtain maps before entering the Boney Mountain Wilderness Area.*

**Grotto Trail** 3.5 miles round trip, moderate to strenuous; no bikes—From the Ranger Station, walk down to the Group Campground where the Grotto Trail begins. This trail traverses the hillsides and the West Fork of the Arroyo Sequit and leads to Happy Hollow Picnic Area, just west of the Grotto area. The trail is downhill from the Ranger Station, which means an uphill return. The Grotto area is rugged terrain; be careful and wear appropriate hiking attire.

*Please respect trail use designations. To preserve the natural environment and for your safety, please stay on trails.*